



Clay Community Health Happenings

Nancy J. Mills, Administrator

May 2012



Clay County Health Department News

Sharps Disposal Sites

Reminder - approved sharps containers will be accepted at Clay County Health Department* Administrative building located at 1305 Idlewild Avenue in Green Cove Springs and at the Bear Run Clinic located at 3229 Bear Run Blvd. in Orange Park. You may take your filled sharps container to the front desk and the receptionist will call for someone to escort you to the biomedical waste disposal bin.

Additionally, the Orange Park Medical Center* located at 2001 Kingsley Ave. Orange Park serves as a drop off point. Take your filled sharps container to the back of the hospital at the **Environmental Service** entrance for further instructions.

*These are the only approved sharps container drop off points in the county.

Only one container will be accepted per drop off and one new container will be issued. This service is provided to the private sector and is only for Clay County residents. All professional businesses are regulated under state and Federal Biomedical Waste laws and may not participate. Call the Clay County Health Department Division of Environmental Health at (904) 529-2840 for more details.

HURRICANE DISASTER DRILL

Under the direction of Clay County Emergency Operations, the Clay County Health Department participated in the 2012 statewide hurricane disaster drill. This year's exercise involved a fictional but realistic scenario of a hurricane making landfall on Tampa area of Florida and traveling across the state in a northeasterly direction. The scenario was a rain and wind event which tested the county's ability to shelter residents affected by the storm as well as manage other complications such handling debris, localized flooding and property damage. The health department's role is health and medical operations. Along with special needs sheltering, some of the other areas the health department would work in include health information to the public, assessing flooded wells and other public health environmental concerns, and post-storm surveillance for vector borne diseases.

Clay County Health Department Preparing for Accreditation

The Health Department is working to become accredited by the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB).

PHAB is a non-profit organization that has developed the national voluntary accreditation program for state, local, territorial and tribal health departments. The goal of accreditation is to improve and protect the health of every community by advancing the quality and performance of public health departments. Louise Kent, Health Planning Administrator for Northern Kentucky Health Department was the key note speaker a recent accreditation kick-off meeting for health department staff. While Ms. Kent addressed the specifics of the accreditation process, Becky Keyes, Performance Consultant from the Office of Performance Improvement, FL Department of Health instructed staff on the process and tools of quality improvement.

The benefits of accreditation are accountability and credibility; potential increased access to resources; strengthening the department through performance and management improvements, leadership and staff development. To be accredited, the health department will have to prove capacity in 12 domains, which include the 10 Essential Services of Local Health Departments*. These are

Clay County Health Department
PO Box 578
Green Cove Springs, FL 32043-0578
904-529-2800

conducting assessment activities; investigating health problems; informing and educating about public health; engaging with the public to solve public health problems; developing public health policies and plans; enforcing public health laws and regulations; promoting strategies to improve access; maintaining a competent workforce; evaluating and continuously improving process; and, contributing to and applying the evidence base for public health. The final two domains are maintaining administrative and management capacity and maintaining capacity to engage the public health governing entity. The Health Department plans to submit their application for accreditation before the end of the year.

*<http://www.cdc.gov/nphpsp/essentialServices.html>

Flu Activity-Clay County

Clay County Health Department monitors Flu and Influenza-like-illness activity using several surveillance systems in place throughout the County. This has been a mild flu season following the trend in Florida. Flu activity continues to decrease as we approach the summer months. Cough, "cold" and congestion have been the major complaints reported. CCHD reminds residents and visitors that the best way to prevent illness is to wash hands thoroughly.

High School Health Fair



CCHD Tobacco Prevention Specialist handing out SWAT (Students Working Against Tobacco) information.

The Clay County Health Department School Health Team piloted their first high school health fair on May 17th. Busy schedules had made it difficult for CCHD School Health nurses to provide health education in certain public high schools. Maria LaRocca, CCHD School Health Supervisor, had the idea of doing a school-based health fair. Keystone Heights High School Principal, Dr. Sailor, agreed to host the event at her school.

The School Health Team researched other successful health fairs and contacted exhibitors who could offer health-related information that targeted high school teens. To encourage the teens to visit each of the 45 exhibitors, the Team added a scavenger-hunt component, allowing students to compete for donated prizes.

It proved to be a fun, interactive health education experience for about 800

students. Exhibitors, CCHD staff, teachers, students and Dr. Sailor were very pleased with the outcome of the event.

Keep Germs out of the Pool!



It's that time again for people to enjoy swimming in a pool. Swimming is the third most popular spots activity in the United States. Water in pools can spread germs that cause illness. The best way to keep germs out the pool is to the follow the **Six Steps for Healthy Swimming**:

- 1) Don't swim when you have diarrhea (loose stools, loose bowel movements).
- 2) Don't swallow pool water.
- 3) Practice good hygiene. Shower with soap before swimming and wash your hands after using the toilet or changing diapers.
- 4) Take your kids on bathroom breaks or check diapers often.
- 5) Change diapers in a bathroom or a diaper-changing area and not at poolside.
- 6) Wash your child thoroughly (especially the rear end) with soap and water before swimming.

If you have questions regarding germs in the pool contact your healthcare provider or call the Clay County Health Department.